

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Claims 1-20 have been rejected as being anticipated by Fields et al.
Reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested in view of the following.

Independent claims 1 and 17 have been amended to recite an applet automatically providing a correct answer after the user surpasses a predetermined number of attempts, a limitation found in previous claim 4. This feature of the invention can be important in a testing environment where a student is being examined using one embodiment of the on-line educational course of the Applicant's invention. The student only has a predetermined number of attempts to answer the question, after which the answer is displayed to the student. In this manner, the student cannot keep guessing at the right answer until it is submitted.

Fields et al. do not teach this limitation. In particular, at col. 7, lines 15ff., Field et al. teach that if the user answers the question, the user has the *option* of validating the answer immediately. If the user chooses the validation, the assessment mechanism displays the correct answer accompanied by a short explanation in the feedback region. After the user is finished, the assessment mechanism displays only the topics in the knowledge base relating to the questions that the user either failed to answer or answered incorrectly. The user does not have to follow the exact pathway displayed by the assessment mechanism. The displayed topic list permits a user to choose any topic of interest, and following links to other resources is optional. Thus, Field et al. do not teach

automatically providing a correct answer after the user surpasses a predetermined number of attempts, but instead afford the user options to validate the answer provided.

Accordingly, favorable consideration and allowance of claims 1 and 17 are earnestly solicited.

Claims 2, 5 and 18-20 depend from claims 1 or 17, which have been amended. Accordingly, favorable consideration and allowance of these claims are earnestly solicited. Claims 3 and 4 have been cancelled.

Independent claims 6 and 11 have been amended to include a definition file, which is unavailable to the user, indicating a correct answer to a question, the definition file being separate from the HTML code containing the question to prevent the user from obtaining the correct answer by looking at the HTML code. Keeping the answers in a separate file is important because typically any user running the HTML code using a browser can view the source code simply by positioning a mouse pointer on a Web page and clicking on the right button of the mouse. According to one embodiment of the present invention, the answers to the questions are included in a separate file not generally available to the user. A second advantage of using a separate definition file arises because the JAVA applet requires the correct answer, to check whether or not a student's reply is accurate, but does not require the question. Thus, it is convenient to utilize a separate file as input to the JAVA applet that contains answers but no questions. The definition file can be altered, and subsequently used by the JAVA applet, without

having to recompile or rejar the applet. Hence, the use of a definition file facilitates the introduction of new questions and the correction of errors. For example, after the applet executes, it may become evident that there is an error, such as a misspelled word in a message provided to the student. The misspelled word can be modified directly in the definition file, and the JAVA code run again, without having to recompile and/or rejar the applet.

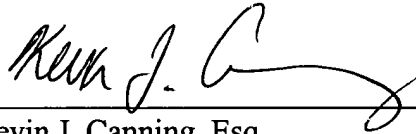
Fields et al. do not teach this limitation. While Fields et al. do mention that “the EPSS [electronic performance support system] may be written in a programming language, such as VisualBasic 5.0 or Java 1.1, for example, that supports an event-driven windowing environment,” they do not disclose a definition file, which is unavailable to the user, indicating a correct answer to a question, the definition file being separate from the HTML code containing the question to prevent the user from obtaining the correct answer by looking at the HTML code. Accordingly, favorable consideration and allowance of claims 6 and 11 are earnestly solicited.

Claims 7, 8, 12 and 13 depend from claims 6 or 11, which have been amended. Accordingly, favorable consideration and allowance of these claims are earnestly solicited. Claims 9, 10 and 14-16 have been cancelled.

Conclusion

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth above, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. The Applicant, therefore, respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all outstanding rejections. Favorable consideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. We invite the Examiner to telephone the undersigned if any issues are deemed to remain.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin J. Canning", is written over a horizontal line.

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APPENDIX A

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

1. (Amended) In an electronic device that provides an on-line educational course, a method comprising:

providing an interactive fill-in-the-blank applet, wherein said applet generates a graphical user interface displaying a text box, a question and instructions to a user to enter an answer to the question in the text box; and

forwarding the applet from the electronic device to a remote client, wherein said applet automatically provides a correct answer in the text box after the user surpasses a predetermined number of attempts.

6. (Amended) In an electronic device that provides an on-line educational course, a method comprising:

receiving a request for a Web page at the electronic device from a remote client;
and

in response to said receiving step, sending a Web page containing a question and a fill-in-the-blank applet embedded therein to the remote client, [wherein] said applet [generates] generating a graphical user interface (GUI) including instructions to a user to enter an answer to the question provided by said Web page, wherein the fill-in-the-blank applet includes a definition file, which is unavailable to the user, defining a correct answer to the question such that the definition file is separate from a source code for said Web page to prevent a user from obtaining the correct answer by viewing the source code.

11. (Amended) A computer-readable medium for use in an electronic device that provides an on-line educational course, comprising

instructions for running a fill-in-the-blank applet for displaying a question and a text box to a user, wherein the user can enter an answer to the question in the text box, the medium including hypertext markup language (HTML) code, which includes the question, to reference the applet; and

a definition file, unavailable to the user, indicating a correct answer for said question, said definition file being separate from the HTML code to prevent the user from obtaining the correct answer by looking at the HTML code.

17. (Amended) An electronic device for providing an on-line educational course comprising

a processor;

a display screen; and

memory including a Web page having an interactive fill-in-the-blank applet embedded therein, the applet automatically providing a correct answer after the user surpasses a predetermined number of attempts, wherein said processor executes said fill-in-the-blank applet to generate a graphical user interface on said display screen, said graphical user interface displaying a question, a text box and instructions to a user to enter an answer to the question in said text box.